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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0602**

June 20, 2008

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM AND  
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<http://markudall.house.gov/HoR/Co02/home>

The Honorable Ike Skelton  
Committee on Armed Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2120 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Skelton:

I am writing to request that you review a classified draft GAO report assessing costs and vulnerabilities of the relocation of the nation's air and space defense command from Cheyenne Mountain to the new NORAD/NorthCom command center at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado and consider sending a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates on this issue

I hope that such a letter could express your serious concerns about the findings of the classified draft GAO report, information from which was recently leaked to a Colorado Springs newspaper.

As you may know, I have long been concerned about the potential vulnerability of the new command center to attack. Since I first learned about the proposed move in a conversation with Admiral Keating in June 2006 – during which he claimed significant cost savings and efficiencies and made no mention of potential security vulnerabilities – NORAD/NorthCom has provided limited and inadequate information to Congress explaining the rationale for and benefits of the move from Cheyenne Mountain. As the Colorado Congressional delegation wrote in a letter to Admiral Keating in July 2006, “We believe that the decision to relocate personnel from the Cheyenne Mountain Complex to Peterson AFB must be done with the support of, and in coordination with, Congress, and more specifically, the Colorado congressional delegation.” This has not happened.

Despite repeatedly expressed concerns, I have never heard an explanation of how Peterson AFB would be as secure a place for these critical systems. Furthermore, General Renuart, the current Commander, Northern Command, has repudiated the apparent savings that Admiral Keating touted as the initial impetus for this move. I strongly supported language in last year's House-passed Defense Authorization bill that would prohibit further funding for the move conditional on the receipt of a report analyzing security-related costs and anticipated operational benefits from the move, as well as final plans for the relocation of the command center. The Senate would not agree to the language, as you know, which allowed NORAD/NorthCom to continue with the move.


I am delighted that we were successful in inserting a new provision in your mark that prevents further movement from Cheyenne Mountain to Peterson Air Force Base until additional information is received from the Department on the vulnerability and risk assessment. Considering the most recent revelations, I hope that you will consider further strengthening this provision in conference.

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I hope you agree that the revelations in the draft GAO report are serious enough to warrant a letter from you to Secretary Gates. As a recent editorial in the Colorado Springs Gazette so aptly put it, "It didn't require an expert report for people to question the wisdom of this location. Nevertheless, an expert report [GAO] has emerged that says just what many feared: the new facility can't be safe".

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark Udall", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name "Mark Udall".

Mark Udall